

The president's budget is really just a stack of paper. It is only as serious as the administration offering it. That said, the budget proposal offered President Obama an important opportunity to turn away from irresponsible deficit spending, trim the size of federal government, and commit to a responsible path forward.

Instead, the president's budget was late, it was huge, and it offered only more of what we have come to expect from this administration when it comes to spending: lots of spending.

To be precise, the Obama budget projects a \$1.3 trillion deficit for FY 2013. This marks the fourth year in a row in which the president would run up a trillion-dollar deficit, incurring \$5.8 trillion in debt during his term of office. Since 2008, our nation's total indebtedness has increased by a full 50 percent, and the president sees little reason to deviate from this course.

Even in a highly political year, the budget proposal includes \$2 trillion in taxes – a stern reminder that it is the American people who fund the operations of our federal government. Mostly though income taxes, we pay for every bureaucrat and every program that the president proposes to fund.

And this budget would increase the funding for hundreds of federal programs, agencies and departments with very little justification.

The Congress will say "no" to the president's budget with little debate. But every American who wants to see a reduction in the amount of federal spending and the size of federal government should remark on the president's budget proposal as proof that we do not have a like-minded partner in the White House.

A good example is in the bill I wrote into law last year to fund the portion of government that deals primarily with financial services. I cut the president's budget request for this fiscal year by 25 percent, sending the strong message that we would not tolerate and could not afford his proposal. We need a budget rooted in reality.

Notwithstanding the bipartisan support for the cuts I proposed, the president's budget for the next fiscal year increases spending in those same areas by 7.7 percent -- \$1.7 billion.

On the budget, this president will not budge.

Congress should not yield, either. We have a long way to go to put our country back on a sustainable path to growth. Cutting spending is only half of the equation, and creating a competitive regulatory and tax environment is the other. These problems deserve our full attention now and in the years to come.

In the meantime, we must continue to make the commonsense case for trimming the budget, year after year, where it has grown too big, where it doesn't provide taxpayers a return on their money, and especially where it is shown to be vulnerable to waste and fraud. These examples abound, and a responsible Congress must keep finding them and asking tough questions about why they should be funded as the president asks.